WCBN
88.3 fm
WINTER
2006
PROGRAM
GUIDE

WCBN 88.3 FM RADIO FREE ANN ARBOR IS:

Your local radio station, run by students, advised by the greater community, emminating at 200 watts from a basement in the Student Activities Building on the UM campus.

We play our own freeform (see below), news, sports, public affairs, and specialty shows.

We produced this program guide to tell you about it.

Contact

wcbn.org for more info

530 Student Activities Building

Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1316

734-763-3500 studio/requests

734-763-3535 programming

734-763-3501 music office

734-647-4122 management

-What's Inside This Thing-

freeform essay

letter from the GM

freeform best-of lists

winter 2006 schedule

- credits -

editing/design - chris janik

cover art - Mrrranda L. Tarrow

robot art - Sarah Hudson

kitten art - Nora Dwyer

sealblaster - Sarah Herard

wizard art - Jeff Walls

additional - noted appropriately

Freeform:

I have never successfully defined freeform. Over the past summer while I was abroad, the handmade Bavarians reacted with drunken novelty when I told them I did college radio.

"Irgendwas. Whatever. Keine Ahnung…"

German vocabulary is inelegant, but I wasn't equipped even in English to encapsulate the Wonka-esque delirium of WCBN.

"… until they smash into the sound of barking human beings being fed back into a Dizzy Gillespie mash-up with Thomas Tallis and Eddie Hazel. Perform repeatedly during backwater early morning hours until gibberish begins to sound like scripture."

Freeform loomed like a supervillain without a creation myth. Freeform loomed like a dominatrix. Freeform loomed in a halo of improvisation and confusion.

Why didn't I "get" jazz? Who knew elephants could play instruments? What constitutes a "song" and what constitutes a "piece"—is "track" reserved for items that defy both these rules? Are noise musicians trying to scare somebody? How much politically-oriented gospel is out there? What does mainstream radio even sound like anymore?

WCBN, as radio stations go, should be treated like a landmark. It pantses the rhetoric of "variety" and "alternative" of most commercial stations not by flouting rules, but by largely ignoring the fact that rules even exist—the archetypical DJ gratifying lovebirds and rockers with persona-driven radio is replaced by a simple human alternative. Personally, I brought almost neither musical knowledge nor a fictional DJ character to WCBN when I started. My shows attempt—when they attempt anything at all—to simply offer a taste of the library to listeners, to give a sense of what's really out there—even as I often discover it for the first time.

There are, of course, exceptions to this idea of freeform—most of the veteran community DJs come across like consummate professionals and cite like music encyclopedias. There are also even some DJs who mix live and create something unique and personal for their shows—imbuing their idea of radio with an authentic sense of performance.

That, however, is not what I do. To be honest, I'm not even sure I've ever really done "radio" before—but I did try to do freeform. Whether I got it right—who knows.

Ryan Healy DJs Fridays, from 11AM-1PM.

Hello WCBN Listeners and Friends:

Thanks for picking up a copy of WCBN's winter program guide. If you've never listened to Radio Free Ann Arbor, I hope this gives you a taste of what we're all about but leaves your mouth and stomach watering and growling for more... oh, and maybe your ears. Tune into WCBN any time of day or night at 88.3 FM, or online at WCBN.org from your dorm room, treehouse, submarine or rocketship.

Speaking of food, there are whisperings around WCBN about printing a Radio Free Cookbook. If our programming inspires you in the right direction, please send us your favorite recipes and what kind of music you would listen to while eating, cooking or otherwise with the particular dish (tastwhatyouhear@umich.edu).

And on the subject of programming, check out whats going on this semester: Blackbox Radio, WCBN's newest independent news program, live writers on the Living Writers Show (John McCain appeared last semester!), the Local Music Show continues, the second semester of the new Latin Music Show, and the secret post-wave-nothings of Some Far Away Beach. And in between all of that, freeform everywhere!

Just between you and me, WCBN has some big changes in its future (no, we are not going to an NPR format). Our studios are wrapped up in rennovation plans for the Student Activities Building, WCBN's home for the past 30 years. Re-arranging will happen soon and we will need to shift thousands of records, so keep an ear out for volunteer opportunities and for a special WCBN wishlist. We will remain in the same space, but it will be a great time to replace the carpet, build some new shelves and reorganize our music.

And of course, don't forget about fundraiser, coming up this February 10-19. Your donations keep us going and make us so happy to know that you are listening. Tune in for more information, or check out WCBN.org to take a peak at the premia we've got coming your way.

Keep in touch, its really fun to hear from you,
In love with Radio,

Sarah Herard
General Manager
f m @ w c b n . o r g

Want to DJ?

Or review new music, engineer shows, make program guides?

The first step is finding the station, and showing up for a training session, held sundays at 4 PM. You can email training@wcbn.org for more details.

Then, if you want to have a show, you'll make a demo tape, get it approved, and apprentice with other DJs.

WCBN and UMMA present
The Books at The University of Michigan Museum of Art

Wednesday March 15th, 2006
525 S State St
For ticket info, stay tuned to WCBN FM and www.wcbn.org

From the archives, WCBN 630 on the AM dial

BlackBox Radio broadcasts from WCBN at 6pm on Tuesday, 12 Noon on Thursday, and 5pm on the last Saturday of the month as part of the Critical Mass Radio Network. BlackBox Radio produces original, independent news programming covering local, national and international issues. Tune in for new voices and perspectives and to hear coverage of events the mainstream media ignores. Want to find out more about BlackBox Radio or get involved? Contact us at news@wcbn.org. BlackBox Radio is always looking for new volunteers to host, write, produce, engineer, and learn about independent radio! No experience is necessary.

WCBN also airs Counterspin on Mondays at 2:30pm, and Free Speach Radio News, Monday through Friday at 5:30pm.

Saramin's top 10 releases of 2005 in alpha order:

-Animal Collective "Feels" (fat cat)
-Boredoms "Seadrum/House of Sun" (vice/atlantic)
-Broadcast "Tender Buttons" (warp)
-Dangerdoom "The Mouse and the Mask" (epitaph)
-The **D**reamies "s/t" (reissue-wilmington studios)
-Konono #1 "Congotronics" (crammed discs)
-Nouvelle Vague "s/t" (luaka bop)
-Paavoharju "Yha Hamaraa" (fonal records)
-Sigur Ros "Takk" (geffen)
-V/A "**T**ropicalia" (soul jazz)

THE GRIND TOP TEN OF 2005!

1.) origin - "echoes of decimation" - relapse records
2.) coffins - "mortuary in darkness" - razorback records
3.) the day everything became nothing - "slow death by grinding" - no escape records
4.) bile - "camp blood" - no escape records
5.) 1349 - "hellfire" - candlelight records usa
6.) nile - "annihilation of the wicked" - relapse records
7.) bongzilla - "amerijuanican" - relapse records.
8.) summon - "fallen" - moribund records
9.) crypticus - "dedicated to the impure" - razorback records
10.) watchmaker - "erased from the memory of man" - willowtip records

Honorable Mentions:
bolt thrower - "those once loyal" - relapse records
between the buried and me - "alaska" - victory records
premonitions of war - "glorified dirt/the true face of panic" - victory records
arsis - "a diamond for disease" - willowtip records
neuraxis - "trilateral progression" - willowtip records
exodus - "shovel headed kill machine" - nuclear blast records

my favorite musicians that start with the letter Q Or, anyone can program 2 hours of radio using the

letter Q:

Quintron
Quix*0*Tic
Q.T. Hush
The Quails

Sarah Herard DJs Wednesdays from 7-9 PM

(new show)

I Believe in Miracles (Full Grown)
A combination of soul/funk/jazz/disco/ breaks/grooves designed to conduct both the butt in your mind and the butt as such.
Tuesdays 3:00-5:15pm Hosted by Robert Wells

My favorite musical points of interest related to 2005 in no particular order.

- Evan Ziporyn – *Typical Music* – piano, piano trio, and gamelan. East meets west gamelan-influenced magic; hypnotic and anxiety-producing.
- Broken Social Scene – Our faces split the coast in half – first track off their new self-titled/*Windsurfing Nation* album, always hooks me for the remaining tracks.
- Dungen – Solen Stiger Upp 1 & 2 – song from reissue of *Stadsvandringar*, includes badass flute section.
- Anthony B – More Pon More & Strong Shoulder – songs from *My Hope*.
- Messer Chups – *Crazy Price* - intensely fun horror-movie-sample-infused surf rock.
- Jib Kidder – Thirteen – my favorite among a slew of great songs.
- Flotation toy warning – Made from tiny boxes – very short but sweet track from *Bluffer's guide to the flight deck*.
- Stephen malkmus – *Face the Truth* – top summertime guitar album.
- Benevento & Russo duo – concert at blind pig by keyboards/toys and drums/beats duo.
- Beatrice Muntoni – piano performance of Mussorgskij and Debussy. I fell in love.

chris janik DJs with Sarah Hudson Sunday Nights/Monday Mornings from 1-3 AM

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
6:00 AM	**Freeform** with Matt Nester	**Freeform with Ben Yee**	**Freeform with Lloyd Cargo**
9:00 AM	**Freeform with Sue Dise**	**Freeform with Laurel Chartow**	**Bioneers**
9:30 AM			**Freeform with J. Not**
10:00 AM		**Freeform with Julia Holter**	
11:00 AM			
12:00 PM	**Freeform with Smoke Dirty**	**The Neon Jazz Train with Greg Kress**	**The Way That Jaw Pops (Freeform) with Crystal**
12:30 PM			
1:00 PM			
2:00 PM			**Freeform with max holtz**
2:30 PM	**Counterspin**		
3:00 PM	**Freeform with Chaz Berret**	**I Believe In Miracles (Full Grown) with Robert Wells**	
4:30 PM			**Living Writers with Ashley David**
5:00 PM			
5:15 PM		**Sports Report**	**Sports Report**
5:30 PM	**Free Speach Radio News**	**Free Speach Radio News**	**Free Speach Radio News**
6:00 PM	**Extra Points**	**Black Box Radio**	**Closets Are For Clothes**
6:30 PM	**Grey Matters**	**Interactive Technologies with Pan**	
7:00 PM	**Yazoo City Calling**	**Train To Skaville**	**Freeform with Sarah Herard**
8:00 PM	**Freeform with Nayiri or Marwa**	**Grad Students on Strike! (Freeform) with Mali &/or Wendy**	
9:00 PM			**Local Music Show with Dustin**
10:00 PM	**Heavy Duty Rama Lama Fa Fa Fa Or Cathedral of Fuzz**	**Booty Shake Contest (Freeform) with SaSted**	
11:00 PM			**Freeform with Tom or MaxBlixx**
12:00 AM	**Freeform with Kevin Daley**	**Freeform with Freedom**	
1:00 AM			**Freeform with Lisa Durussel**
3:00 AM	**Freeform with Evan Eustice**	**Freeform with Mark Murphy**	**Freeform with Bertrand Metton**

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Freeform with Keith Larsen or Uncle Dave Lewis	**Freeform** with sean westergaard	**Freeform** with Marvin Bartlett	**Freeform** with brendt rioux
Freeform with Alex	**Freeform** with Amy Aranoff	**Kids On Strike**	**Tsunami Dream**
		Bill Monroe For Breakfast	**Turkish Delight**
	Freeform with Ryan Healy		**Dromedary Express**
Black Box Radio		**Down Home Show**	**Jaffa Jive**
Freeform with Karl Pestka	**Freeform** with JNCarey		**Latin Music Show**
			Radiozilla
Freeform with Dan the Dentist &/or Mikey B	**Freeform** with Abby	**Nothin' But The Blues**	**Sounds of the Subcontinent**
Sports Report		**Robot Pasta (Freeform)**	**Only One Ration Point**
Free Speach Radio News	**Free Speach Radio News**		
Renegade Solutions with Charmie Gholson	**Hear And Now** with Ben Reading and Juan Tunow		**Horizons**
Pandora's Lunchbox with Mike Perini			
Face The Music with Arwulf	**Game of The Week**	**Dancehall Reggae**	**Some Faraway Beach**
Freeform with Saramin or Mrrranda			**Pan-African Heartbeat**
Crush Collision	**The Grind** with Scott	**Prop Shop** with Chill Will	**Jazz and Non-Jazz (Freeform)** with Jason Adam Voss
			Hydrogen Jukebox (Freeform) with Chris Fici
Freeform with Alex Belhaj or Ian Whiteford	**Freeform** with Meg & Co.	**Underground Reciprocals** with Irwin+	**Freeform at Face Value** with chris janik &/or Sarah Hudson
Freeform with Evan Oestreich	**Freeform** with Jason Bates	**Freeform** with Rachel	**Freeform** with Bill Corrigan

10 WORLD ALBUMS THAT WILL ROCK YOU!

Compiled by Jen Herard

1. Wyclef Jean "Welcome to Haiti: Creole 101" Sak Pase
2. Amadou & Mariam "Dimanche A Bamako" nonesuch
3. Yerba Buena "Island Life" Razor & Tie
4. v/a "Coconut FM: Legendary Latin Club Tunes" essay recordings
5. Balkan Beat Box "Balkan Beat Box" Jdub
6. Ali Farka Toure "Red & Green" World Circuit
7. v/a "World Psychedelic Classics 3: Love's a Real Thing" Luaka Bop
8. Antibalas "Government Magic EP" Afrosound
9. Kronos Quartet and Asha Bhosle "You've Stolen My Heart" nonesuch
10. DJ Dolores "Aparelhagem" Ziriguiboom

Jen is going to Jamaica

The Dancehall/Reggae Show

Saturday 7-9pm edt
Train To Skaville-Tuesday 7-8pm edt
Brian Tomsic

706 Spring
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Phone: (734)646-6156 Fax: (734)663-7115
email: reggae@wcbn.org

Best of 2005
-Singles

1. Welcome To Jamrock-Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley
2. Lava Ground-I Wayne
3. Telephone Ting-Kiprich
4. Reflection-Jah Cure
5. Hail The King-Fantan Mojah
6. Notorious-Turbulence
7. We'll Be Burnin'-Sean Paul
8. Willie Bounce-Elephant Man
9. Serious Time-Gyptian
10. Ganja Farmer-Marlon Asher

-CDs

1. Welcome To Jamrock-Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley-(Tuff Gong)
2. Lava Ground-I Wayne-(VP)
3. Hail The King-Fantan Mojah-(Greensleeves)
4. Reggae Gold 2005-Various-(VP)
5. Infiltration-Assassin-(VP)
6. Strictly The Best 33 & 34-Various-(VP)
7. Freedom Blues-Jah Cure-(VP)
8. The Trinity-Sean Paul-(VP)
9. Biggest Reggae One Drop Anthems 2005 Various-(Greensleeves)
10. World Jam-Various-(Greensleeves)

RAD LICKS, HOT JAMZ

By Dustin Krcatovich

My two favorite things in life are music and food (well, there's also my other favorite thing, The Olympics, but that's another article). By logical extension, my favorite things about Ann Arbor are the diverse local musical community and the equally diverse selection of food. With that in mind, here are some fairly recent local records, and what food is best to eat while listening to them. Take my advice, or you'll get a bellyache.

1) Kelly Jean Caldwell, *Banner Of A Hundred Hearts*- falafel and rice pilaf from Jerusalem Garden
2) Juan Garcia and Fred Thomas, *Birdsong*- People's Food Co-Op salad bar
3) Chris Bathgate, *Silence Is For Suckers* homemade pumpkin bread and mid-priced beer
4) V/A, *Encore Recordings Compilation*- large skim vanilla latte w/extra shot from Café Ambrosia
5) Patrick Elkins, *The New Folk Sounds Of Patrick Elkins*- potato dumplings From Earthen Jar
6) The Avatars, *Wait 7"*- french fries from the Fleetwood Diner
7) Wolf Eyes, *Burned Mind*- potentially rotten avocado obtained via dumpster diving

When he's not busy projecting his delusions of grandeur onto various uninterested parties, Dustin Krcatovich hosts the Local Music Show (Wednesday, 9-11 pm).

If WCBN is cool, do it's DJs and volunteers smoke cigarettes?

Well, some do and some don't. Here are some ways each camp rationalizes itself:

Top 5 reasons **to** smoke cigarettes:

1. It gets you higher.
2. Adds a layer of complexity to your personality.
3. Gives points if you can smoke while playing your instrument.
4. Suppresses your appetite.
5. Numbs your senses to everyday annoyances.

Top 5 reasons **not** to smoke:

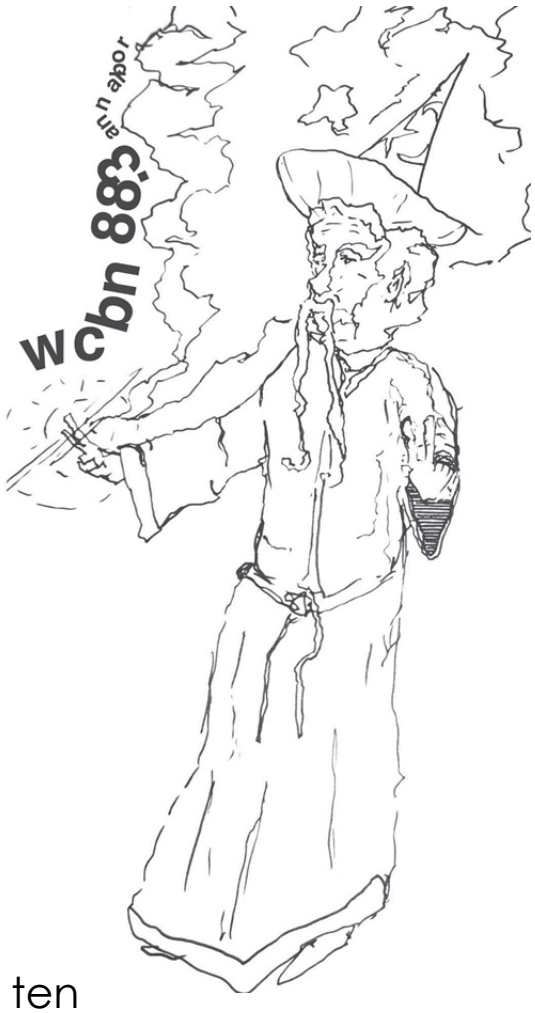
1. Makes you feel in control of your life.
2. Don't have to stand in the cold so much.
3. No chest pain during cardio workout.
4. Can cause cancer (but broccoli might counteract this?).
5. You're better than anyone who smokes.

I think the reason that I enjoy cigarettes so much – aside, of course, for all the usual reasons – is that I get a kick out of dealing with a nagging level of addiction. If I smoke too many, then I get nothing out of it. But then I think about it more, and I get more enjoyment out of the cigarettes that I do smoke.

It's sort of a power struggle with three players. There's me, being cool, smoking cigarettes, getting a nice mellow buzz. Then there're other people, seeing me, being cool. Then there're the cigarettes, nagging at me. They have their ups and downs, but are continually let down, I imagine, because I keep leading them on, never quite becoming addicted.

Is that an excuse to gain control in a situation where I really represent the weak element? Am I too much of a flop to quit or commit to smoking, struggling to come out on top in a situation that can have no winner?

Check out Jonathan Franzen's article **Sifting the Ashes** *if you really want to think about cigarettes.*



ssc top ten

1) earth "hex: or printing in the infernal method"
2) 10th ward buck "a true bounce artist"
3) various artists "rio baile funk: favela booty beats"
4) phillip gayle "the mommy row"
5) madvillain "madvillainy: fourtet & koushik remixes"
6) jan jelinek "komischer pitch" ~scape
7) paul wall "the peoples champ"
8) various artists "guitars of the golden triangle"
9) zeena parkins & ikue mori "phantom orchard"
10) andrew pekler "strings and feedback"

sean listens to all the music before us

This is a manifesto: Art into life! Life into remission! A new ice age!

DJ MIKEY B'S TOP NINE RECORDS (AND ONE EP) FOR 2005

I love end-of-the-year lists, no matter what anyone says. I refuse to enumerate these things, however, because I think that's the wrong way to look at music. If my inklings are correct, and human consciousness/soul-power is one big nebulous

blue glob of interconnected wonderment,

then not one thing can exist by itself without its connections to everything else. And I guess I'd feel weird picking one instrument or musician or record to be the "number one," because if I only had that one, things would get pretty lonely. Instead, in standard WCBN fashion, I've categorized them according to genre. These, then, are the records that meant the most to me this year.

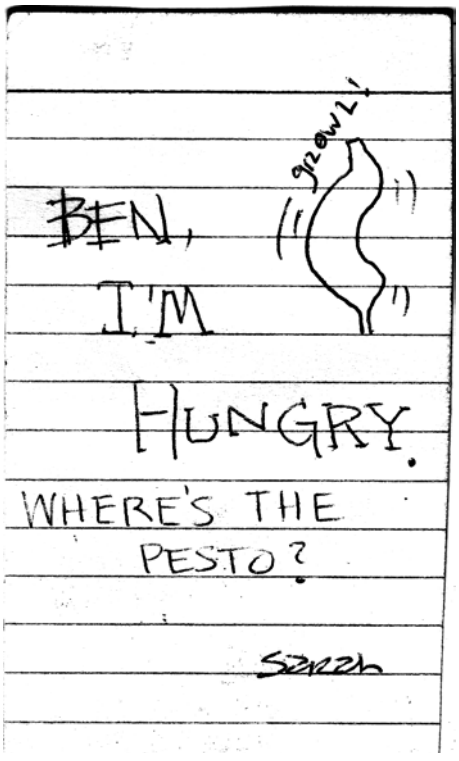
Reggae

-Fanton Mojah, Hail the King. Greensleeves Records.

The best original reggae I've heard in a long time. Plus, dude's press photo is of him riding a horse and pointing somewhere far off and meaningful in the distance, something probably no one else can see. He's like a Rasta warrior king. Hail, indeed.

-Sinéad O'Connor, Throw Down Your Arms. Rocket Science.

I discovered this, Sinead O'Connor's newest album, about a month ago in the handy-dandy New Section at 'CBN. The record is a collection of classic reggae tunes interpreted by O'Connor and produced by Sly & Robbie, and it's surprisingly good. Her delivery of this music is so honest that I can't help but give her tons of props. My roommate knows that I've already listened to this way too much.



Hip-Hop

-FatLip, The Loneliest Punk. Delicious Vinyl.

The dude from the Pharcyde is back, finally, and he's making self-deprecation rap a threat again. Plus we've got both clean and dirty versions at the station, so FatLip can rule the airwaves both day and night. Be sure to request the openhearted and slightly bitter divorce anthem, "The Story of Us."

-Geto Boys, The Foundation. Asylum/Rap-a-Lot Records.

This is ghetto rap at its finest (the song "G-Code" is incredible), but you can't pass up the more introspective and spiritual tracks like "Leaning on You," which is about Jesus. The song's got a really awkward, three-second didgeridoo sample, too. Because, you know, it's the instrument of the Lord or something.

Local

-The Black Dahlia Murder, Miasma. Metal Blade Records.

These guys have been chugging out their At the Gates-meets-Morbid Angel death metal for a while now, and they're pretty much unstoppable at this point. The song "I'm Charming" is absolutely one of the best metal songs of 2005.

Rock

-Japanther, Master of Pigeons LP and Yer Living Grave EP. Menlo Park Recordings.

Japanther came out with two releases this year, and they both deserve equal attention. These guys are the best group of post-modern kids with guitars working today, they along with the Hold Steady and the Thermals. "The Gravy" is a good place to start; it's a wonderfully frenetic love song, of sorts, about a bicycle.

-Jesu, Jesu. Hydra Head Records.

This album is a recent discovery for me – and so is the whole "doom" genre. Jesu is beautiful in the way an avalanche is beautiful. An avalanche in slow motion, though. And you're floating above it, watching the slow-motion avalanche and soaring through the air with black angel wings. It makes my chest fill up with hope and giddiness and some sorrow, too. This is why we listen to music.

-Bonnie 'Prince' Billy & Matt Sweeny, Superwolf. Drag City Records.

Will Oldham (the man behind Bonnie 'Prince' Billy and various Palace projects) has never done me wrong. The instrumentation on here is interesting and is something to talk about if you're the type of person who's looking for something to say about an artist's career or direction or something of that nature. But honestly, I am way too into Oldham's music to pretend to be objective about any of that. His albums take up about half of the memory on my iPod, and I've listened to this one like crazy this year. It's a beautiful piece of art.

Folk

-Langhorne Slim, When the Sun's Gone Down. Narnack Records.

Because there's no such thing as too much alt-country.

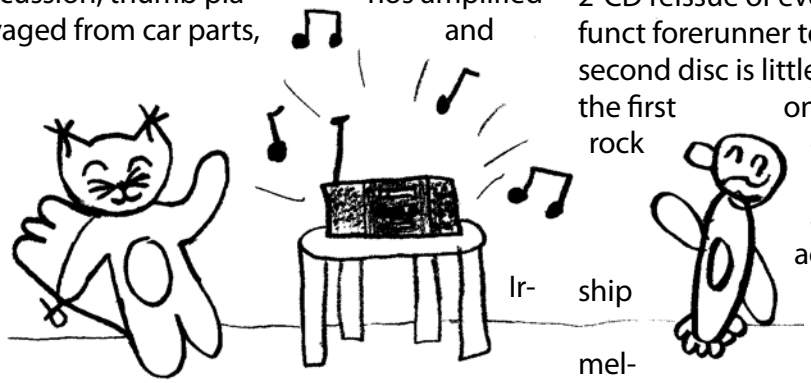
Mikey B DJs with Dan the Dentist Thursdays from 3-5pm, and on Some Faraway Beach, Sundays 7-8pm

IGNORE THE NUMBERS, THEY ARE ARBITRARY

BY MRRRANDA L. TARROW

1. Gang Gang Dance - God's Money - a heady miasma of effects-heavy guitar, chimes, synth, and percussion often evocative of Gamelan or Arabic music, all offset by vocalist Lizzi Bougatsos' androgynous sing-song keening and staccato poetics.

2. Konono No.1 - Congotronics - "electrified traditional music from the Congo," produced from, essentially, junk: pots-n-pans percussion, thumb pianos amplified by magnets salvaged from car parts, and jerry-built microphones and speakers, sometimes with jubilant call-and-response vocals. Irresistable and hypnotic.



3. Fiery Furnaces - EP - this band had two great releases this year, starting with their hook-laden, upbeat EP. Most tracks run so relentlessly into each other - sometimes changing course on a single, jarringly sharp note - that the CD really is best heard straight-through, but highlights include the curiously seductive "Sullivan's Social Club" and gleeful "Here Comes The Summer." The Furnaces have no qualms (or trouble) with penning infectiously peppy sing-alongs about domestic violence ("Single Again") or threading together what first seem to be non-sequitors into vivid miniature worlds ("Tropical Ice-land").

4. Fiery Furnaces - Rehearsing My Choir - further illustrating the band's creative versatility is this full-length concept album inspired by the Friedberger duo's grandmother. Grandma Olga led a Greek Orthodox choir in the Chicago neighborhood where she lived most of her life, a life apparently peppered with Gypsy curses, Polish gun shops ("you could smell the boiled cabbage on those bullets"), and medicinal donuts. While lead vocalist Eleanor sweetly opens most songs, Grandma adds long stretches of rambling spoken word. Her unusually masculine voice sounds vaguely like Crispin Glover. It's a bit off-putting at first, but the stories themselves are endearing; their initial whimsy gives way to unexpected poignancy, as she contemplates her approaching death with stark defeatism and daydreams "about the hard lot of other women."

Mrrranda DJs with Saramin Thursdays from 8-10 PM
email: mrrranda@scribble.com

5. Dungen - Stadsvandringar - While the more recent (and more polished) Tat der Lungt is getting more acclaim, I prefer this year's reissue of Stadsvandringar, especially for its uncharacteristically somber closer "Krona," more reminicent of a moody, European art-house film score than the band's usual straight-from-the-60's, feel-good prog-pop. As they told their audience at The Magic Stick, "we sing all in Swedish, but you don't care!"

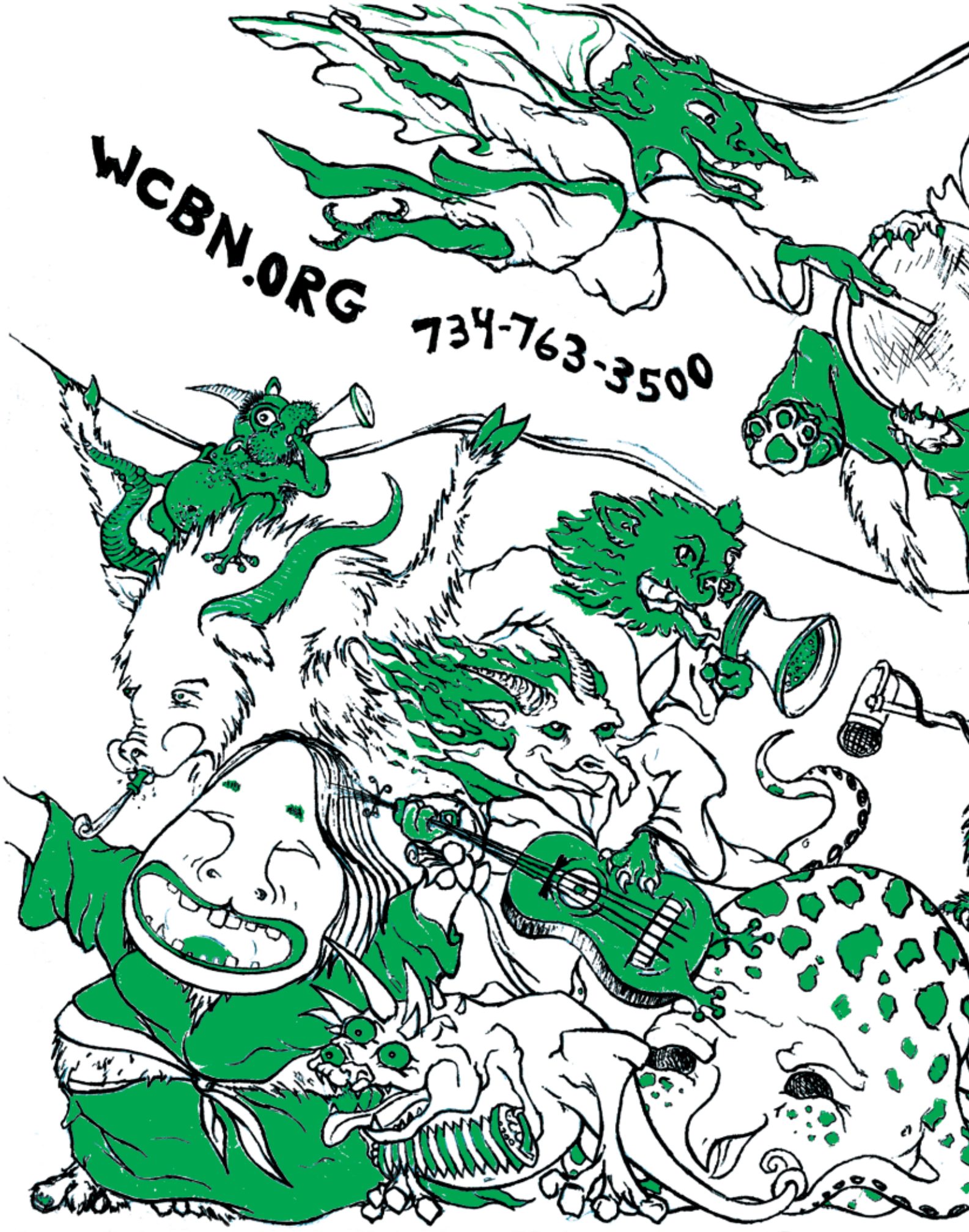
6. Comus - Song to Comus: The Complete Collection - a 2-CD reissue of everything ever produced by this long-defunct forerunner to artists like Cerberus Shoal. Sadly, the second disc is little more than half-assed hippie pap, but the first one is stunningly well-crafted, creepy folk-rock encompassing ghoulish murder ballads, praise for ancient hunting goddesses, and pleas from the asylum. The mostly-acoustic but production-savvy musicianship is top-notch, with slide guitar sounding more like singing saw, and airy string melodies giving way to long swaths of tribal percussion. Roger Wootton sings in a trilling falsetto that drops suddenly into a wet, pagan snarl and occasionally sounds like a badly-tripping Bonn Scott.

7. The Decemberists - Picaresque - 11 clever, penny-dreadful vignettes sporting foppish charm, a fancy vocabulary, glockenspiel and accordion. The tales of the sailor enacting vengeance from within the belly of a whale and of the low-rent boys loitering by the bus mall are particularly catchy.

8. P. Miles Bryson - Megalomaniac Decorator's Quarterly - Bryson extensively plunders vintage exotica, go-go, and songs by ethusiastic farmers to construct a giddily schizoid ersatz wonderland. The liner notes, touting the virtues of formica and fascism, are fun too.

9. Hiromichi Sakamoto - zero-shiki - Cellist Sakamoto embellishes relatively traditional playing with singing saw, vocals, and electronics, sometimes pounding on, scrubbing, and even applying small drills and grinders to his instruments. Ranges from meditative and cinematic to exuberantly cartoonish, often within the same songs.

10. Kemialliset Ystavat - Kellari Juniversumi - psychedlic Finnish folk for fever dreams. Prepare to rip off your thermal sleepwear and stagger into the tundra's lengthy twilight, as your sweat freezes into frost and your own ragged breath envelops you in sickly fog. Bumped to "best of" status for its colorful 24-page art brut booklet of scrawls and collage, more unsettling than any regional death metal.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